

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

The text of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claim 21 in accordance with the following:

1. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method used in a system to purchase a product over a network, said method comprising:
  - associating cart identification information with a first user;
  - receiving, from the first user, designation information of a third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view product information which the first user associates with the cart identification information, and which provides a product related to the viewed product information as well as additional information related to the viewed product information, said third party product provider not having permission to view the cart identification and product information before receipt of the designation information;
  - associating and storing the designation information with the cart identification information;
  - receiving product information on said product from the first user;
  - associating said product information with the cart identification information;
  - notifying said third party product provider associated with said cart identification information of said cart identification information and product information in accordance with a receipt of designation information of said third party product provider or a receipt of said product information;
  - receiving additional information regarding the product identified by said product information, and the cart identification information, from said third party product provider;
  - determining whether the received additional information is from the third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view the product information associated with the cart identification information;
  - associating said received additional information with said cart identification information according to the determination result; and
  - notifying said first user of said received product information and additional information.

2. (original) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

associating settlement information of said user needed for a purchase of said product over said network with said cart identification information;

receiving an instruction for said purchase of said product from said first user; and  
selling said product to said first user, using said settlement information.

3. (original) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 2, further comprising:

storing whether or not said product is purchased; and  
notifying said first user that said product is purchased or not purchased yet.

4. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 2, further comprising:

receiving an instruction for assignment and second user information on a second user from said first user; and

associating said second user with said cart identification information.

5. (original) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 2, further comprising:

determining whether or not an incentive condition has been fulfilled based on said product information, designation information and settlement information, said incentive condition predetermined for awarding said first user for said purchase of said product; and

awarding said first user based on said determining.

6. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

notifying said product provider of said additional information.

7. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

notifying said product provider of competitor information on other product providers.

8. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

monitoring for an occurrence of a predetermined event based on said product information and designation information; and

notifying said product provider of said occurrence when said predetermined event occurs.

9. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

determining whether or not said product provider has fulfilled a fee charging condition based on said product information and designation information,

computing fee charging information for charging fees to said product provider which has fulfilled said fee charging condition; and

storing said fee charging information for invoicing said product provider.

10. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

computing a relationship between product and product price based on said product information; and

supplying said relationship to said first user and/or said product provider.

11. (previously presented) An online sales promotion apparatus used in a system to purchase a product over a network, said apparatus comprising:

means for associating cart identification information with a first user;

means for receiving, from the first user, designation information of a third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view product information which the first user associates with the cart identification information, and which provides a product related to the viewed product information as well as additional information related to the viewed product information, said third party product provider not having permission to view the cart identification and product information before receipt of the designation information;

means for associating and storing the designation information with the cart identification information;

means for receiving product information on said product from the first user;

means for associating said product information with the cart identification information;

means for notifying said third party product provider associated with said cart identification information of said cart identification information and product information in accordance with a receipt of designation information of said third party product provider or a receipt of said product information;

means for receiving additional information regarding the product identified by said product information, and the cart identification information, from said third party product provider;

means for determining whether the received additional information is from the third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view the product information associated with the cart identification information;

means for associating said received additional information with said cart identification information according to the determination result; and

means for notifying said first user of said received product information and additional information.

12. (previously presented) A computer-readable recording medium whereon is recorded an online sales promotion program, for use in a system to purchase a product over a network, said program executes:

associating cart identification information with a first user;

receiving, from the first user, designation information of a third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view product information which the first user associates with the cart identification information, and which provides a product related to the viewed product information as well as additional information related to the viewed product information, said third party product provider not having permission to view the cart identification and product information before receipt of the designation information;

associating and storing the designation information with the cart identification information;

receiving product information on said product from the first user;

associating said product information with the cart identification information;

notifying said third party product provider associated with said cart identification information of said cart identification information and product information in accordance with a receipt of designation information of said third party product provider or a receipt of said product information;

receiving additional information regarding the product identified by said product information, and the cart identification information, from said third party product provider;

determining whether the received additional information is from the third party product provider which the first user permits to view the cart identification information and to view the product information associated with the cart identification information;

associating said received additional information with said cart identification information according to the determination result; and

notifying said first user of said received product information and additional information.

13. (cancelled)

14. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method, comprising:

receiving, via a network, designation information designating one or more third party information-providing terminals which the first user permits to access a cart identifier associated with the first user, to access product information which the first user associates with the cart identifier, and to provide additional product information related to the accessed product information, from a first user terminal, said third party information-providing terminals not having permission to view the cart identifier and product information before receipt of said designation information;

storing in a first storage, in association with the cart identifier, the product information and the designation information;

sending the cart identifier and the product information associated therewith to the one or more designated third party information-providing terminals in accordance with a receipt of designation information of the one or more third party information-providing terminals or receipt of the product information;

receiving additional information regarding the product information, and the cart identifier, from any one of the designated third party information-providing terminals;

determining whether the received additional information is from the third party information-providing terminal which the first user permits to access the cart identifier and to access the product information associated with the cart identifier;

storing the received additional information in association with the cart identifier in a second storage according to the determination result; and

sending to the first user terminal the product information and the additional information.

15. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method according to claim 14, further comprising:

associating and storing settlement information of the first user needed for a purchase of the product over the network with the cart identifier; and

receiving a designation instruction and purchase of the product from the first user terminal.

16 (previously presented) An online sales promotion method according to claim 15, further comprising:

receiving from the first user terminal an assignment instruction of the cart identifier to a second user terminal; and

rewriting the user terminal associated with the cart identifier from the first user terminal to the second user terminal.

17. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:

storing an incentive condition for sending award information relating to a purchase of a product to the user terminals;

determining whether the incentive condition is met based on information associated with the cart identifier; and

sending the award information to the first user terminal in accordance with the determination result.

18. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 14, further comprising:

monitoring an occurrence of a predetermined event based on information associated with the cart identifier; and

notifying the designated information-providing terminal of the occurrence of predetermined event.

19. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 14, further comprising:

storing a charging condition for charging administrators of the information-providing terminals in the second storage; and

monitoring for an occurrence of an information-providing terminal that matches the charging condition based on information associated with the cart identifier, and upon a match, computing charging information for charging fee to an administrator of that information-providing terminal.

20. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 14, further comprising:

receiving a designation of one or more information-providing terminals and the product from one or more user terminals other than the first user terminal;

storing by a first storage of product information for each information-providing terminal; and

extracting and analyzing the product information that includes a price of the product, computing an analysis result indicating relationship between the product and the price of the product, and sending the result to the first user terminal and/or the information-providing terminals that the first user terminal has designated.

21. (currently amended) An online sales promotion device, comprising:

a first acceptance unit to receive means for receiving, via a network, designation information designating one or more third party information-providing terminals which the first user permits to access a cart identifier associated with the first user, to access product information which the first user associates with the cart identifier, and to provide additional product information related to the accessed product information, from a first user terminal, said third party information-providing terminals not having permission to view the cart identifier and product information before receipt of the designation information;

a first storage unit to store means for storing, in association with the cart identifier, the product information and the designation information;

a first notification unit to send means for sending to the designated third party information-providing terminals the cart identifier and the product information associated therewith in accordance with a receipt of designation information of the one or more third party information-providing terminals or receipt of the product information;

a second acceptance unit to send means for receiving additional information regarding the product information, and the cart identifier, from any one of the designated third party information-providing terminals;

a determining unit to determine means for determining whether the received additional information is from the third party information-providing terminal which the first user permits to access the cart identifier and to access the product information associated with the cart identifier;

a second storage unit to store means for storing the received additional information in association with the cart identifier according to the determination result; and

a second notification unit to send means for sending to the first user terminal the product information and the additional information.

22. (previously presented) A computer-readable recording medium storing a program to perform online sales promotion, by:

receiving via a network, designation information designating one or more third party information-providing terminals which the first user permits to access a cart identifier associated with the first user and to access product information which the first user associates with the cart identifier, and to provide additional product information related to the accessed product information, from a first user terminal, said third party information-providing terminals not having permission to view the cart identifier and product information before receipt of the designation information;

storing, by a first storage, in association with the cart identifier, the product information and the designation information;

sending the cart identifier and product information associated therewith to the designated third party information-providing terminals in accordance with a receipt of designation information of the one or more third party information-providing terminals or receipt of the product information;

receiving from any one of the designated third party information-providing terminals additional information regarding the product information, and the cart identifier;

determining whether the received additional information is from the third party information-providing terminal which the first user terminal permits to access the cart identifier and to access the product information associated with the cart identifier;

storing in a second storage the received additional information in association with the cart identifier according to the determination result; and

sending to the first user terminal the product information and the additional information.

23. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method, comprising:

associating product information and designation information, designating a third party that the first user permits to access the product information and supply additional product information, with cart identification information of a first user, said third party not having permission to view the cart identification and product information before receipt of the designation information from the first user;

providing the cart identification information and the product information to the third party;

receiving the additional information and the cart identification information from the third party;

determining whether the received additional information is from the third party which the first user permits to access the product information and supply the additional product information;

associating the additional information with the cart identification information according to the determination results; and

providing the associated information to the first user.

24. (previously presented) The online sales promotion method according to claim 23, further comprising:

associating settlement information needed for a purchase of the product with the cart identification information; and

selling the product to the first user, using the settlement information.

25. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method according to claim 23, further comprising:

receiving an instruction from the first user to assign information to a second user; and associating the second user with the cart identification information.

26. (previously presented) An online sales promotion method in accordance with claim 23, further comprising awarding an incentive upon determination that an incentive condition is fulfilled.